



BLACK'S FORT MESSENGER

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE TOWN OF ABINGDON, VIRGINIA

Volume IV, Issue III

JAN/FEB/MAR 2011

Out With The Old, In With The New... Year!



On December 2nd, 2010, 400 people gathered for the Annual Town Christmas Tree Lighting at the Market Pavilion. The event featured the Watauga Elementary Choir, Miss Washington County Courtney Thomas, Miss Junior Washington County Kacy Thomson and the jolliest elf of all, Santa. A special thank you is extended to the many town employees and volunteers who worked to make this event a great success.

THIS ISSUE...

Town
Happenings



Weather Alert



Local Venue
Schedules

THE TOWN OF ABINGDON

133 WEST MAIN STREET • ABINGDON, VIRGINIA • (276) 628-3167

From the Upper Deck

Page 3

People You Should Know

Page 4

Happenings 'Round Town

Page 5

Barter Theatre 2011

Page 6

William King Museum 2011

Page 7

Calendar

Page 8

Administration

Town Manager Greg Kelly

Mark Godbey.....	Finance Director	Town Clerk	Cecile Rosenbaum
Myra Cook.....	Tourism Director	Police Chief	Tony Sullivan
Garrett Jackson.....	Town Planner	Information Technology	Floyd Bailey
Deb Icenhour.....	Town Attorney	Economic Development/Grant Writer	Jim Cowart
Marion Watts.....	Building Inspector	Public Works Director (Streets Division)	John Dew
Joey Burke.....	Fire Chief	Public Works Director (Wastewater Division)	Jim Smith
Jim Hicks.....	Human Resources & Safety	Parks & Recreation Director	Kevin Worley

For questions or comments email: abingdonnews@abingdon.com

FROM THE UPPER DECK



It's hard to believe that another season has come and gone since my last writing. We now find ourselves in the midst of a cold and blustery winter where the warmth from every sunshiny day is greatly welcomed to help us fight off the "cabin fever" that we all seem to be experiencing. Despite the cold, the Town was blessed with the beautiful and white Christmas that everyone always hopes for. The snow covering only seemed to enhance the overall town wide Christmas décor and provided a nice backdrop to this year's Christmas parade as well.

Along with the snow comes the greater demand on the town troops, who are out at all hours, to keep the town streets cleared so that we can continue to safely go about our normal daily routines. Speaking of snow, this is a good opportunity to briefly address the Town's snow removal ordinance relative to sidewalks, as there was some confusion among businesses and residents concerning this issue during our last snow storm. Accordingly, I have included a section in the newsletter relative to how sidewalk snow removal is governed and enforced. I have also placed the policy on the town's website to better get the word out before the next snow storm. Everyone is encouraged to read and review our ordinance to ensure uniform snow removal and to ensure public safety during inclement weather events.

With the beginning of a new year, comes the tedious process of planning the budget for the upcoming fiscal year. And as many of you are aware the Town has many new and interesting capital improvement projects in the "hopper." We continue to push forward with the pedestrian improvement phase of our capital improvement plan by adding sidewalks and recreational pathways along Whites Mill Road, Court Street, Oak Hill Street and a couple of unopened streets and alleyways. Some construction will begin in the upcoming fiscal year and will likely carry through the next fiscal year as well. In addition, we continue to study and pursue the development of a sports complex which will be even more important to our community if the new King College Medical School gets underway in Abingdon. The new jobs and economic benefit from the medical school locating here have the potential to transform Abingdon to an even higher level of success than it already experiences from its rich cultural heritage. Many of the things in the "hopper" that I reference will take some time to fully develop but, nonetheless, they are things to look forward to in each of the next few years.

Before closing, let me mention that the long awaited Artisan Center, Heartwood, should be completed and open in early summer, so be prepared to experience all of what it has to offer and especially be prepared for yet more tourists to hit the streets of Abingdon. We will do our best to see that visitors stopping at Heartwood also come on into the downtown Abingdon area to experience our shopping, dining and cultural uniqueness.

With that said, I will close for this quarter by wishing our entire team a happy and prosperous New Year. Until next time, enjoy the winter solstice and the joy of the arrival of Spring just around the corner.

Very truly yours,

Weather Alert

Our weather pattern this winter has caused a fair amount of concern and some inconvenience with regard to the clearing of snow and ice from our public areas within the town. Because the town offices have received inquiries and calls concerning this issue, we thought it would be helpful to clarify responsibilities as they are applicable to our sidewalks within the town. Pursuant to the Code of Virginia 1950, as amended, §15.2-1115, the Town of Abingdon may compel the abatement or removal of all nuisances from public and private property, including but not limited to snow and ice from sidewalks. Section 62-61 states that the owners and occupants of lots abutting on the streets of the town shall keep the paved sidewalks in front of their premises free from dirt, filth, trash, snow, ice, wood, coal, barrels, boxes or any other obstruction likely to interfere with the convenience of the public. The town may enforce this section and section 62-62 as provided in the Code of Virginia 1950, as amended, §15.2-1115. The entire Code of Ordinances for the Town of Abingdon can be easily accessed online at www.abingdon-va.gov, under the drop-down menu labeled "around the Town" then by clicking on the last selection "Town Code of Ordinances". Please feel free to contact Mr. Dew, in the Public Works Department, should you have additional questions and/or concerns. Abingdon is a wonderful place to live and work and we strive to keep our public facilities safe and as accessible as possible year-round.



ELLEN LEE



Ellen Lee was born and raised in Scranton, Pennsylvania. After graduating high school she attended Indiana University where she received a Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology/Archaeology. After college she worked for Citibank in New York City before moving to Idaho with her husband Alan. She attended graduate school at Colorado State University, University of Idaho and University of Wyoming. She lived in Idaho for 27 years and Wyoming for 3 years before she and Alan moved to Abingdon, where he was Washington County Superintendent of Schools.

Ellen joined the staff as the Administrative Services Coordinator at the Coomes Recreation Center in May 2005 after working as a Telecommunications Analyst for Electrolux in Bristol. Ellen has been a member of the Antiques Committee of the Highlands Festival for ten years working as secretary and publicity chairperson. She also does volunteer work for the Children's Advocacy Center of Washington County. She and Alan have one son, Zachary who is with the US Attorney's office in Abingdon. Ellen likes reading, beading, taking care of her three dogs, baking and searching for carved birds to add to her collection. Ellen takes great pleasure in her job and working with the rest of the Coomes Center team.

DANIEL KIDD

Daniel Kidd is the IT Systems Administrator for the Town of Abingdon. Born in Bristol, TN, he has lived most of his life in Washington County, VA. Daniel graduated from Abingdon High School and while working for the town, continued his education with a Bachelor of Arts in Management Information Systems from King College. While attending Abingdon High School, Daniel was an active member in the Boy Scouts of America and attained the highest award of Eagle Scout. At King College, he participated in the Student Government Association serving as Information Technology Secretary and as a minister. He also swam on the King Tornado Men's Swim Team at the national level. In his spare time, Daniel enjoys any activity outdoors; hiking, biking, camping, running and swimming to name a few.



Daniel has worked for the Town of Abingdon in various departments since February 2005, but was hired full time as the IT Systems Admin in June 2010. In his job position for the town, Daniel is in charge of planning, configuring, and troubleshooting the town's server and application infrastructure, as well as various other technology needs of Town departments.

MICHAEL WORRELL



Michael Worrell is a native of Abingdon and serves as the Code Compliance Officer, within the Planning Department. He is a graduate of Abingdon High School and Emory & Henry College, where he majored in Political Science and History, and was a member of the Cross Country Team. In addition, Michael graduated from the T.C. Williams School of Law at the University of Richmond and is a member of the Washington County Bar Association. Michael's duties include ensuring that the Town's Codes and Ordinances are being adhered to as well as writing proclamations for the Town Council when needed.

Michael is a member of the Pleasant View United Methodist Church in Abingdon, where he serves on several committees and is a member of the Choir and Hand Bell Choir. He is also, a vocalist in the Symphony of the Mountains Choir in Kingsport, Tennessee. He enjoys running, history and is an amateur railroad enthusiast.

Christmas In Abingdon



This year's Annual Breakfast with Santa at the Coomes Recreation Center included 100 children, families, Town staff and volunteers. As they enjoyed their breakfast, all anxiously awaited a visit from Ole St. Nick. And what to our wondering eyes did appear the jolly man himself. Children of all ages, had the opportunity to divulge their deepest wishes, have their pictures made and received a special treat.

This year's Holiday Market concluded with the announcement of the Town's First Christmas Tree Decorating Contest winner. Councilman Bob Howard announced the winners, who were: Boy Scout Troop 1 (First Place); Honorable Mention went to Miss Amy's Day Care, the Coomes Recreation Center's boys and girls club and the Washington County Library. Thanks to all who participated.



Greetings from the Abingdon Go Green Committee! We are excited for the many "green" possibilities that this New Year will bring us. We are pleased to announce the launch of our very own website, check us out at www.abingdongogreen.com. Our goal is for everyone to be able to use it as a tool in their quest to become more "green". We also have a Facebook page at www.facebook.com/abingdongogreen, be sure to add us to your Friends list to keep up with all that we are doing in and around town. And finally, look for our huge Earth Day celebration coming in April! If you would like to be involved in helping with planning the celebration or if you or someone you know would like to set up a booth for Earth Day, please contact our Chairperson, Sherrie Leab at sleab@tnc.org.

Down On Main Street

Effective December 1, 2010, Susan Howard became Executive Director for Advance Abingdon. In this role, she is busy setting up AA's new office located in the Fields Penn House at 208 West Main Street, Abingdon. "We are so appreciative of the town's support in allowing us to use this space in this lovely historic home," says Howard. "It is a work in progress, but we welcome visitors to our new digs."

For 2011, Advance Abingdon will focus on supporting downtown merchants, working with the town government on way-finding signage, planning downtown events, and board and committee development. "As a former Main Street business owner, I know the challenges facing our retailers and I look forward to working with the merchants," says Howard. "We want to develop a plan that will help them support each other and work together to attract shoppers to their stores." Advance Abingdon is a volunteer driven organization and welcomes anyone with interest in downtown development. Susan Howard may be contacted at 276-698-5667 or advance@abingdonva.us.

Howard has lived in Abingdon for 20 years. She owned and operated Plumb Alley Beads from 2003 to 2009. Prior to that, she worked in Human Resources Management for fifteen years. A native of Christiansburg, Virginia, Howard is a graduate of Bluefield College. She and her husband, Town Council member, Bob Howard, live on Valley Street. Mrs. Howard is an avid collector of vintage jewelry, is active in her church where she sings in the contemporary praise band, and spends much of her time caring for her brood of pets including two dogs and five cats. "I have lots of things I am passionate about and one of them is Abingdon. There is no better place in the world to live."



The Town of Abingdon is now going online to sell surplus equipment and vehicles.

If you are interested in viewing or bidding on the Town's surplus items, follow this link:

<http://www.publicsurplus.com/sms/abingdon.va/list/current?orgid=98036>

You can also view and bid on other surplus items from all of the United States and Canada from the provider's homepage at www.publicsurplus.com. The site offers features including a search specific item or category, and a search by state, territory, or specific agency.

You must register with the site to bid on items.

Now Playing...



Magic and adventure abound at The State Theatre of Virginia as Barter Theatre kicks off the 2011 season with two exciting productions; "Xanadu," a magical, musical comedy set in the 80s, and the swashbuckling adventure "Treasure Island." Tickets go on sale January 1 for all 2011 shows.

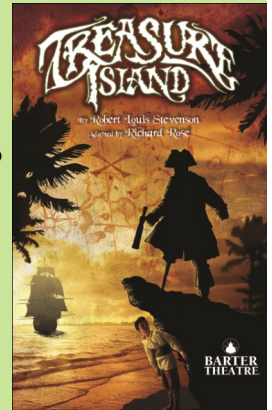
On February 4, it's 80s in Abingdon with the opening of "Xanadu!" Director Richard Rose said, "This highly infectious musical features the hit songs, "All Over the World," "Suddenly," "Strange Magic," "Evil Woman," "Don't Walk Away" and "I'm Alive" made famous by Olivia Newton-John. The soundtrack was certified double platinum and was a worldwide success. Barter's resident company will have you singing these songs for weeks to come."

Set in Venice Beach, California, Xanadu stars Ben Mackel (Tommy, "The Who's Tommy" and Joseph, "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat") as the artistic human, Sonny. Ashley Campos ("Dead Man's Cell Phone," "Blackbird") stars as the heavenly muse, Clio, who is tricked by her sisters and finds herself caught in a forbidden love affair with a human man. Danger ensues in this tale of love between man and muse and their roller disco, Xanadu.

"It's a love story with a slice of 80s cheese," said Danielle Goodrich, director of marketing. Goodrich added, "This is sure to be a fantastic time for young and old alike. It has all the musical contagiousness of 'Grease,' plus the humor of National Lampoon's."

Amanda Aldridge has been tasked with choreographing the first ever show with wheels. Sonny and Clio skate during part of the show, and the finale has everyone in roller skates with beach balls. Aldridge has also been chosen to design the costumes. She is fascinated by the idea of choreographing some of the dance numbers on roller skates! Aldridge said, "Designing the costumes is lots of fun since they range from the 1980s Venice Beach to an 80s look at the gods of Mount Olympus with a few mythological creatures thrown in, like the centaur."

Also playing on Barter Theatre's Main Stage is a tale of pirates, buried treasure and adventure. "Treasure Island" has been adapted from the Robert Louis Stevenson's novel by Richard Rose. This play is added to the long list of Barter hits via Rose adaptations, including "Frankenstein," "The Hunchback of Notre Dame," "Alice in Wonderland" and many more classics. Rose will also direct the show set to tour the nation this fall.



Young Jim Hawkins (Kevin O'Brian, "It's a Wonderful Life") finds himself on an incredible adventure to find the lost treasure of the evil Captain Flint. But when the ship's cook – the infamous Long John Silver – and the crew turn out to be dangerous pirates themselves, Jim must become a man and either confront the danger or risk losing his life.

Long time wig and makeup designer, Ryan Fischer, who also designed the wigs and makeup for "The Wizard of Oz," will be tackling his first show as costume designer with "Treasure Island."

"After speaking to Rick and the set designer, Dale F. Jordan, we decided to go with a playful tone with some grit," said Ryan. "I feel like audiences are really going to be drawn into this show; be pulled in and go on this fantastic adventure."

Playing across the street from Barter Theatre at Barter Stage II will be three additional productions. "Civil War Voices" is a new play from Jim Harris. In remembrance of the 150th anniversary of the first shots fired in the greatest conflict in our nation's history comes a brand new play that uses the authentic words of real people and weaves their stories with the traditional music of the period. "It will be the personal stories you don't get to read in history books," said Goodrich.



Also playing at Barter Stage II, "Eye of the Storm" and "Journey Through the Mind: Edgar Allan Poe," two shows by acclaimed actor Will Stutts. Last but not least in the list of productions in repertory at Barter is "Age of Arousal." It's a time when women are indentured to their husbands because they are not allowed to learn a skill. But what happens when that paradigm is flipped on its head and women of the country begin to learn how to be self-sufficient?

"Xanadu," "Treasure Island," "Civil War Voices," "Eye of the Storm," "Journey Through the Mind: Edgar Allan Poe," and "Age of Arousal" all begin at Barter Theatre this February. Barter is offering a "Xanadu" special discount for groups of seven or more and encourages everyone to sport their 80s duds when coming to see the show, especially your legwarmers and togas!

Call 276.628.3991 or visit BarterTheatre.com for more information. Find Barter Theatre on Facebook and receive insights from [Twitter.com/BarterInsider](https://twitter.com/BarterInsider). Watch clips from the shows and other fun stuff at [YouTube.com/BarterTheatre](https://www.youtube.com/BarterTheatre). Barter Theatre: Where Stories Live!

facebook

&

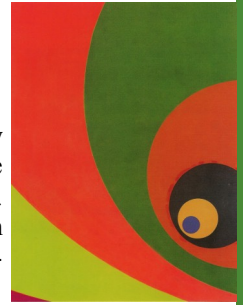
twitter

Follow the Town on

Thinking Postmodern: Selections from the Radford University Art Museum **September 10, 2010 – March 20, 2011**

United-Legard Galleries

The Radford University Art Museum houses a diverse collection of works by nationally and internationally recognized artists alongside lesser-known artists from our region. Many of these artists were productive in the mid-twentieth century during a time that is considered the beginnings and outcome of the Postmodern Era. This exhibition celebrates and fosters appreciation for the more inconspicuous movements of the twentieth century; all of which have shaped the art of today. Among the most notable artists to be featured in the exhibition are John Cage, Elaine de Kooning, Richard Tuttle, and Hannah Wilke.



To Transgress: Abstract Paintings by Betty Clark **October 22, 2010 – April 3, 2011**

United Company Regional Art Gallery

Asheville, North Carolina artist Betty Clark's paintings are steeped in the rich traditions of the abstract expressionists yet her themes relate to our modern day political and psychological turmoil. Her somber gray glazes produce a melancholy haze from which her spirited marks emerge. The frenzied swarms of line and color are indicative of fury and frustration. The descriptive titles make clear her trouble with our transgressions and exploitations. Yet despite her gesture toward cynicism, Clark imbues her work with fragility and beauty to reflect on the ephemeral nature of our being with anticipation for renewal.

Mischief-Making: Contemporary Craftsman Jake Cress **January 28 – June 19, 2011**

Price-Strongwell Galleries

Jake Cress views himself not as a studio craft artist or a sculptor, but as a cabinetmaker, a descendant of the very craftsmen whom the Cultural Heritage Project documents and honors. The artisan's work ranges from the traditional to his more well-known "animated" works – chairs that carve their own arms, clocks that swat at mice with their pendulums, and tables with crutches for legs. Cress's truly original approach showcases his talent while simultaneously allowing him to have fun with his craft.



Point-Time: A Graphic Confluence of Artists

Curated by Jean Hess and in conjunction with East Tennessee State University

January 4 through January 30, 2011

Artist Reception, January 4 from 6 – 8 pm

This exhibition will showcase the visual art currently being produced in metro-Knoxville, Tennessee, with no other agenda than to represent what is created in this particular locale. This exhibition presents an opportunity to look at this geographic context in freeze-frame, and will run concurrent to the East Tennessee State University exhibition providing audiences with a more comprehensive experience of the work. The artists that will be featured in Point-Time include Chad Airhart, Paige Barbee, Robmat Butler, Rachel Clark, Alan Finch, Nick de Ford, Diane Fox, Marcia Goldenstein, Joyce Gralak, Briana Harmening, Jean Hess, Thomas Riesing, Denise Sanabria, Zachary Searcy, Jason Shoemaker, Jessie Van der Laan, and David Wolff.

Derek Smith

February 1 through February 27, 2011

Artist Reception, February 1 from 6 – 8 pm

We, as humans, are instinctually programmed to emotionally respond to outside stimuli, whether it be sight, sound, touch, taste, or feel. It is my task as the artist to create striking and engaging works that draw the viewer in and promote thought.

Derek Smith is a native of Kingsport, Tennessee. He is an alumnus of Savannah College of Art and Design graduating magna cum laude with a BFA in Painting in 2003. Since then, he has been Barter Theatre's Scenic Artist and has worked on approximately 100 shows. Popular designs have been featured in *Betrayal*, *Beyond Gravity*, *Greater Tuna*, *Thousand Cranes*, *Lear*, *Blackbird*, *Four Places*, *Othello*, *Frosty* and most recently *Dead Man's Cell Phone*. Derek maintains a working studio in Bristol, Tennessee, where he and his wife currently reside with their newborn son, Aiden.

Inspired by Nature: Ceramics by Cecelia Pippin and Adelaide Moss

March 1 through April 3, 2011

Artist Reception, March 1 from 6 – 8 pm

Cecelia Pippin has been a clay artist and teacher since 1991. She has taught in the Wise County Public Schools and Norton City Schools as an art teacher in grades K-12 and currently teaches ceramics at William King Museum. Making functional, decorative pots brings balance to her and she hopes to pass on the pleasure of pottery to others.

Adelaide Moss is an Abingdon resident and was trained formally in oil painting at Hollins University. She has shown work throughout New England, in Australia, and more recently at the Arts Depot in their Spotlight Gallery. Moss teaches pastel painting at William King Museum where she also has worked in ceramics with Cecelia Pippin.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Town Council Meetings
First Monday of Each Month
7:30pm
Town Hall
Public Welcome

Board of Architectural Review
First Wednesday of Each Month
5:00pm
Town Hall
Public Welcome

Board of Zoning Appeals
Second Tuesday of Each
Month (if called)
6:00pm
Town Hall
Public Welcome

Town Offices Closed
Jan. 14~ Lee-Jackson Day
Jan. 17th~ Martin Luther
King Jr. Day
Feb. 21st~ Presidents Day

Planning Commission
Fourth Monday of Each Month
5:30pm
Town Hall
Public Welcome